MARVEL COMICS
MAVERICK
APR
#8
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Who took the Honey-Comb?
SPOOKY TIMES
Gloomy with a chance of Mystery
HAUNTED MANSION FOUND FREE IN EACH MARKED BOX OF POST® HONEYCOMB®!
KIDS ENCOURAGED TO USE MANSION TO CATCH "THE HONEYCOMB® HEISTER"
In a case that's been plaguing the city for months, the Post Police have turned to kids for help. Post Officer Becky Robb had this to say: "We're hoping kids will use the one free Haunted Mansion found in each specially marked box of Post Honeycomb cereal to help all of us solve this very creepy and elusive mystery."
Officials know only that something really spooky happened inside the Honeycomb Haunted Mansion and, since then, the cereal's been missing. However, they continue to express hope that kids' craving for Honeycomb will make this huge nationwide effort a success.
FOUR SUSPECTS QUESTIONED IN HONEYCOMB® HEIST
Clue Cards May Help Place Suspect At Scene Of Crime
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LET'S MEET

MAVERICK

Clandestine warfare is a wildly unpredictable and dangerous game. For **Maverick**, it is a way of life.

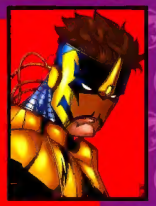
A master in the deadly art of espionage, his unique mutant physiology and state-of-the-art weapons arsenal have become his stock-in-trade.

Currently suffering the effects of a terminal illness which is slowly consuming his body from within, Maverick is living proof that one's control over one's destiny is somewhat limited at best.

Haunted by his past. Hunted by his foes. Betrayed by his own body. In many ways, Maverick has good reason to fear life more than he does death.

Yet still he clings to life, all the while struggling to fill the little time he has left with some sense of purpose. Especially now that he has finally found a family to call his own— a testament to the fact that the ties that bind are often forged in the face of great adversity.

MAVERICK



A former CIA operative working for Team-X, David North became a mercenary for hire who goes by the moniker Maverick. Since then, he has specialized in the dirty jobs that no one else wants to do yet desperately need doing, using his mutant power to absorb and rechannel kinetic impact at will. Infected with the Legacy Virus and faced with an uncertain future, Maverick has no way of knowing what will kill him first: his many enemies... or his own body.

CHRIS BRADLEY

At sixteen, Christopher Bradley learned he was a mutant and that he had contracted the Legacy Virus. Maverick arranged for Chris and his family to be relocated after anti-mutant violence destroyed their home. Though Chris possesses the ability to emit electrically-charged bursts of energy, his control over these powers is becoming increasingly erratic as his condition worsens.

ISABEL FERGUSON

Isabel Ferguson has always had an ingenious knack for inventing things. Due to the fact that her father was head of the British Armory Department at M.I.6., she specializes in manufacturing custom-designed, state-of-the-art ordnance and other high-tech gadgets. Determined to maintain a low profile, she works on a strictly freelance basis— which allows her to be extremely choosy about her clientele. Isabel has a baby daughter named Madeline.

THE CONFESSOR

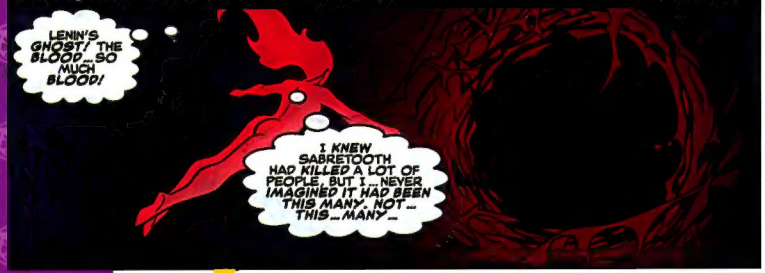
The Russian mercenary whose weapons have a decidedly religious theme, the Confessor's past involvment with Maverick is as mysterious as his identity.

PREVIOUSLY IN

MAVERICK

Maverick, in an effort to protect Elena, was forced to defend himself found himself against Sabretooth in the sewers of Manhattan.

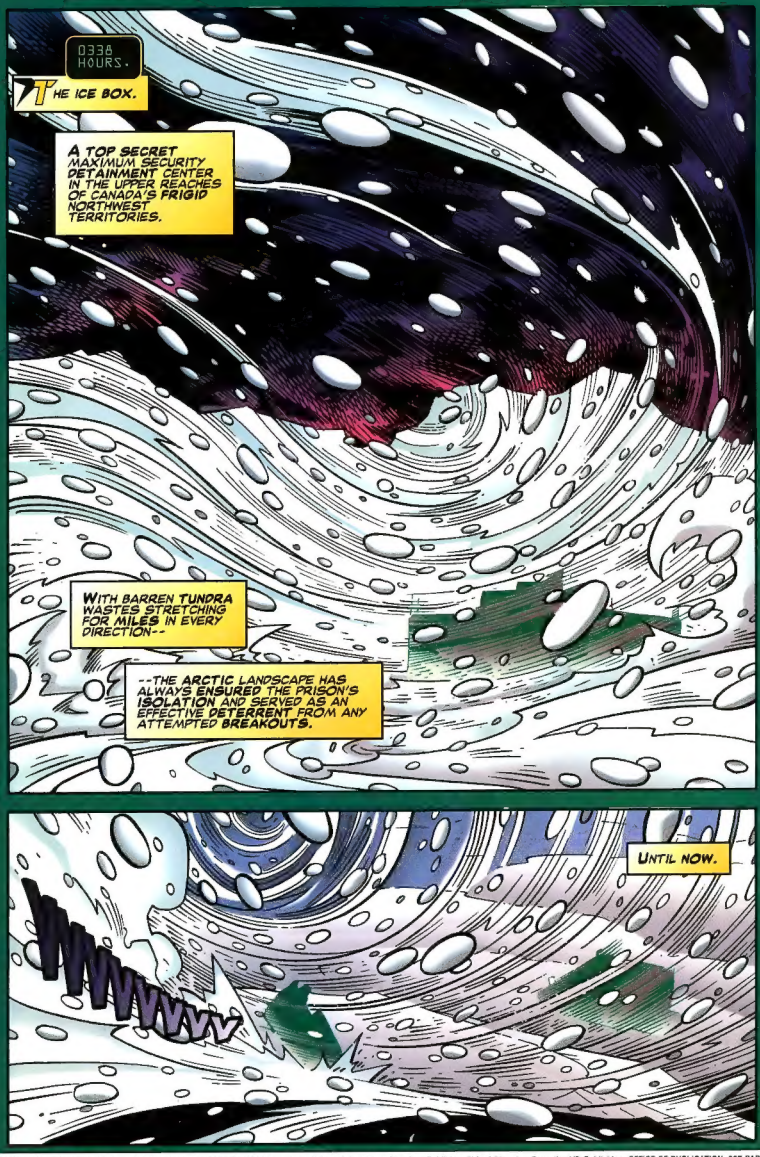
When Maverick temporarily gained the upper hand, Elena used her psychic powers to enter the maniac's mind, where she found herself confronted by the tortured "souls" of his victims— including that of her mother.


LENIN'S GHOST! THE BLOOD... SO MUCH BLOOD!
I KNEW SABRETOOTH HAD KILLED A LOT OF PEOPLE, BUT I... NEVER IMAGINED IT HAD BEEN THIS MANY. NOT... THIS... MANY...

The resulting psionic backlash, severed Elena's link with Maverick, throwing his powers out of control.

Sabretooth was ultimately defeated by Maverick, and Elena finally had her revenge. The cost, though, was immense, for Elena had slipped into a coma.

Design by COMICRAFT's John Marasigan


0338 HOURS.
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A TOP SECRET MAXIMUM SECURITY DETAINMENT CENTER IN THE UPPER REACHES OF CANADA'S FRIGID NORTHWEST TERRITORIES.
WITH BARREN TUNDRA WASTES STRETCHING FOR MILES IN EVERY DIRECTION--
--THE ARCTIC LANDSCAPE HAS ALWAY'S ENSURED THE PRISON'S ISOLATION AND SERVED AS AN EFFECTIVE DETERRENT FROM ANY ATTEMPTED BREAKOUTS.

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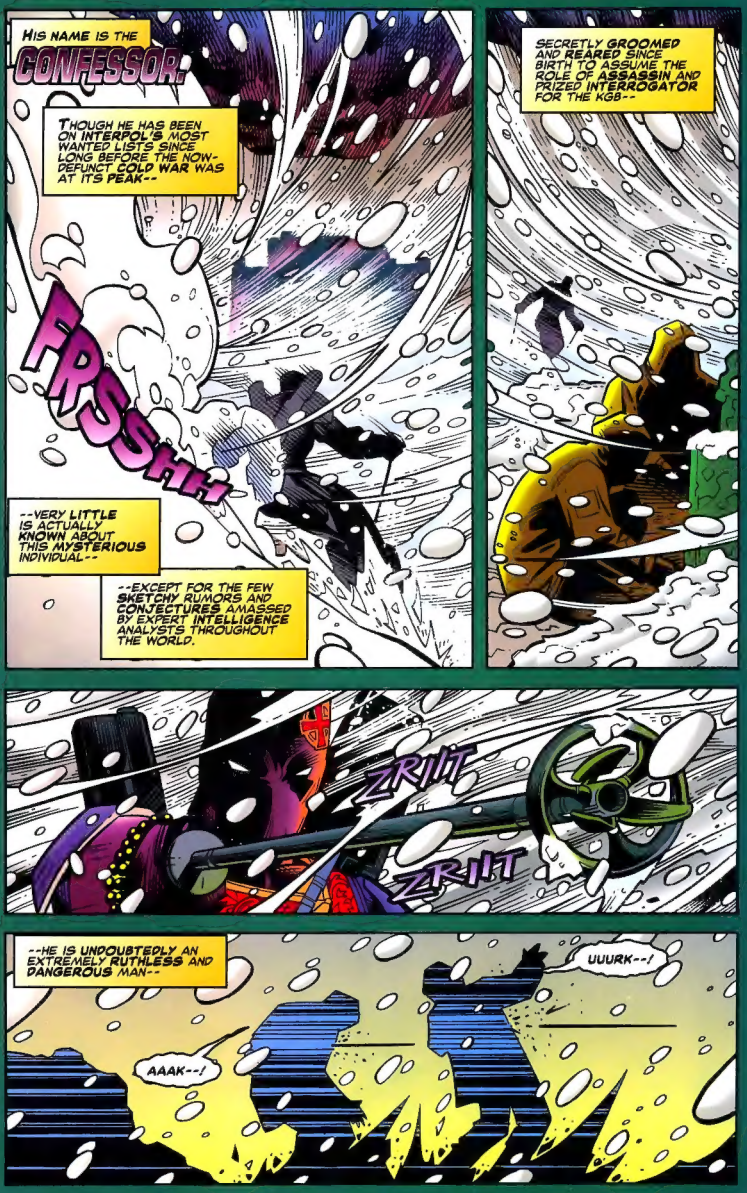
FRACTURED LIVES
JORGE GONZALEZ
WRITER
JIM CHEUNG & LEO FERNANDEZ
PENCILERS
ANDREW PEPOY
INKER
CHRIS ELIOPOULOS & VINDAL CALLIGRAPHY
LETTERS
KEVIN SOMERS
COLORS
FRANK PITTARESE
EDITOR
BOB HARRAS
EDITOR IN CHIEF


HIS NAME IS THE CONFESSOR.
THOUGH HE HAS BEEN ON INTERPOL'S MOST WANTED LISTS SINCE LONG BEFORE THE NOW-DEFUNCT COLD WAR WAS AT ITS PEAK--
FRSSHH
--VERY LITTLE IS ACTUALLY KNOWN ABOUT THIS MYSTERIOUS INDIVIDUAL--
--EXCEPT FOR THE FEW SKETCHY RUMORS AND CONJECTURES AMASSED BY EXPERT INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.
SECRETLY GROOMED AND REARED SINCE BIRTH TO ASSUME THE ROLE OF ASSASSIN AND PRIZED INTERROGATOR FOR THE KGB--
ZRIIIT
ZRIIT
--HE IS UNDOUBTEDLY AN EXTREMELY RUTHLESS AND DANGEROUS MAN--
AAAK--!
UUURK--!

--RENOWNED FOR HIS RATHER UNORTHODOX METHODS AND BRAZENLY SACRILEGIOUS CHOICE OF WEAPONS.
WATCH YOUR FIRE, YOU IDIOTS! THAT MANIAC'S USING LISTER AS A SHIELD--!
UUURRKT--!
BRAKKA BRAKKA
THWAK
SHRUKKT
T-TOO LATE, SIR...
LISTER WAS A FRIEND. WHOEVER THIS GUY IS, HE'S GOT A LOT TO ANSWER FOR. DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY--!
BRAKKA BRAKKA BRAKKA BRAKKA
BRAKKA BRAKKA BRAKKA BRAKT

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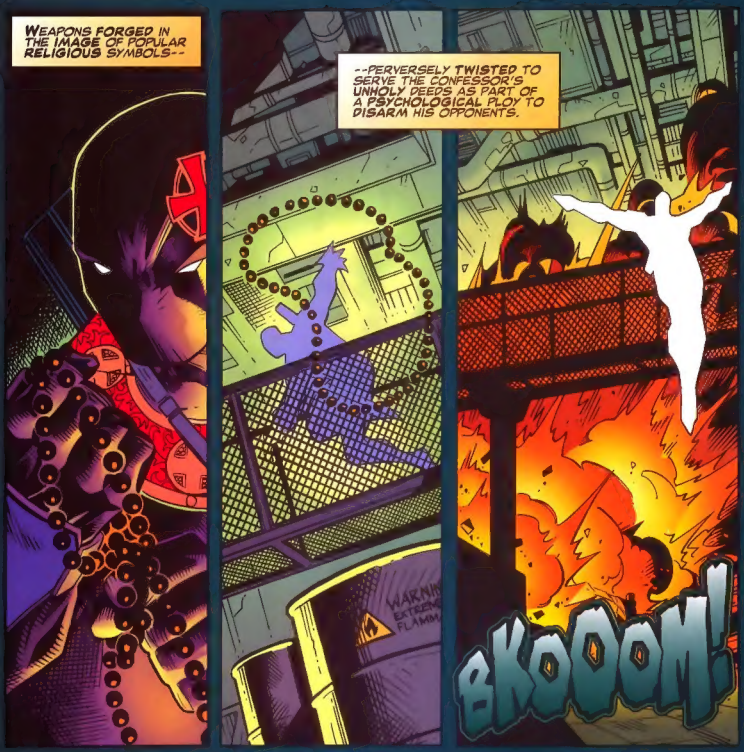
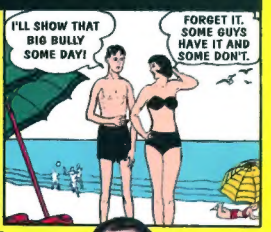
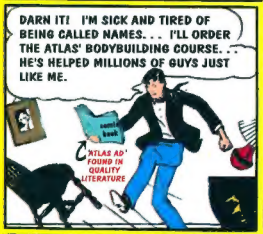
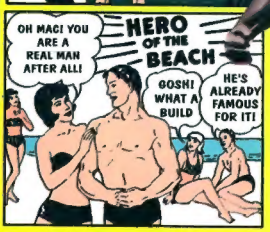

WEAPONS FORGED IN THE IMAGE OF POPULAR RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS--
--PERVERSELY TWISTED TO SERVE THE CONFESSOR'S UNHOLY DEEDS AS PART OF A PSYCHOLOGICAL PLOY TO DISARM HIS OPPONENTS.
BKOOOM!

THESE DAYS, HE WORKS STRICTLY FREELANCE--
--WITH LOYALTIES ONLY TO HIMSELF AND HIS HIDDEN AGENDAS.

TIRED OF BEING PICKED ON?
NOBODY PICKS ON AN "ATLAS MAN!"




DARN IT! I'M SICK AND TIRED OF BEING CALLED NAMES. . . I'LL ORDER THE ATLAS' BODYBUILDING COURSE. . . HE'S HELPED MILLIONS OF GUYS JUST LIKE ME.
"ATLAS AD" FOUND IN QUALITY LITERATURE



I WAS PICKED ON TOO - NOT ANYMORE!

That's right fellas, I understand how it feels to be **"picked on."** I was a skinny "97-pound weakling." I was so ashamed of my scrawny body that I dreaded being seen in a swim suit or going to the gym. The girls wouldn't look at me and the guys gave me no respect. That all changed for me, and I'll change it for you. I'll make you an **"Atlas Man."** I will build you a massive muscular body to impress the girls and stop the bullies! **You have my word on that!**

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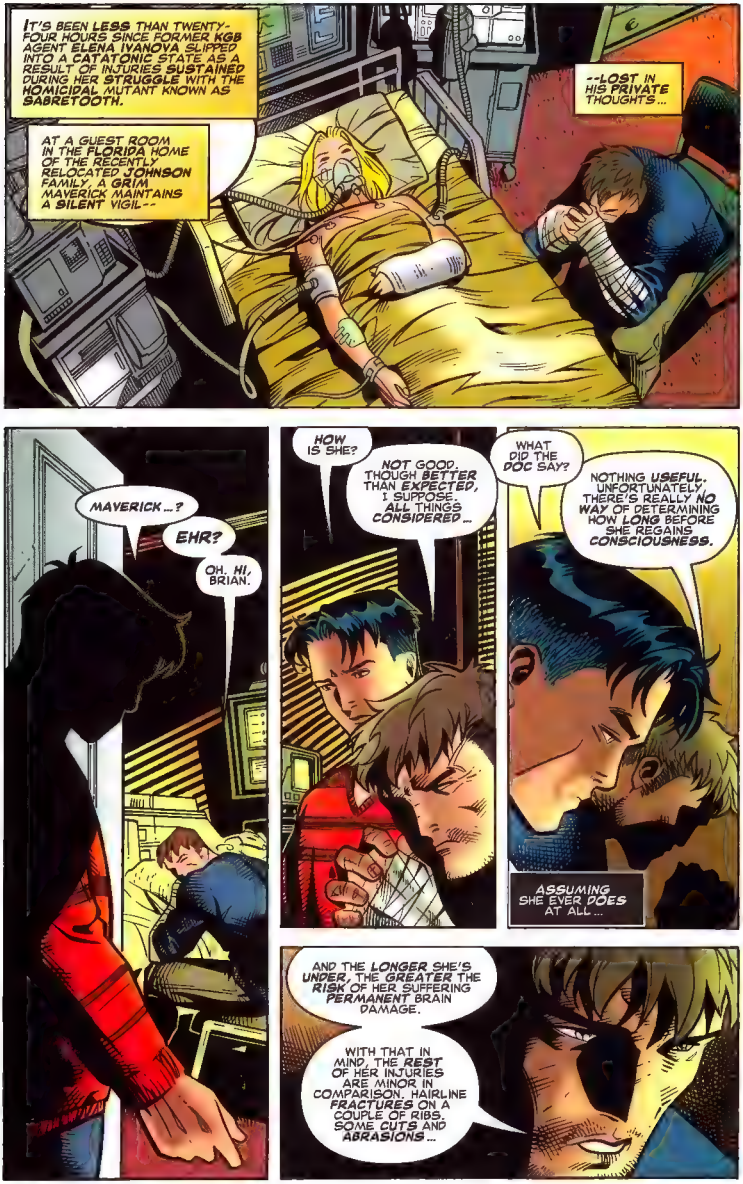
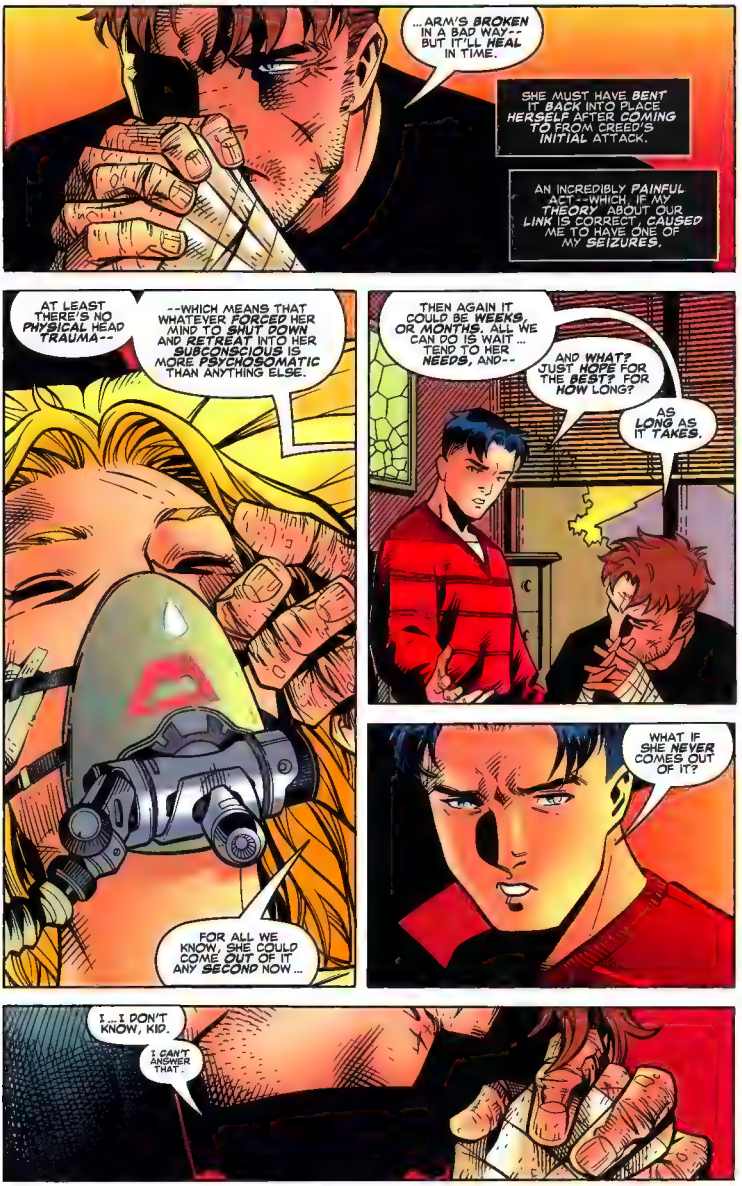
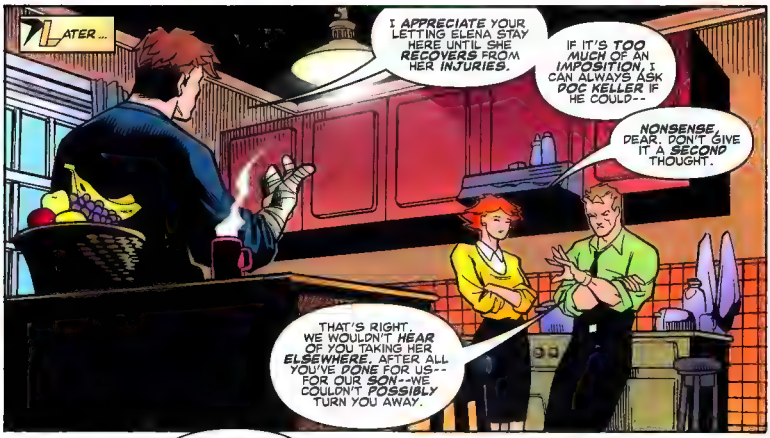
The Surgeon General has determined that lack of physical exercise is detrimental to your health.


It's been less than twenty-four hours since former KGB agent Elena Ivanova slipped into a catatonic state as a result of injuries sustained during her struggle with the homicidal mutant known as Sabretooth.
At a guest room in the Florida home of the recently relocated Johnson family, a grim Maverick maintains a silent vigil--
--lost in his private thoughts...
Maverick...?
Ehr?
Oh. Hi, Brian.
How is she?
Not good. Though better than expected, I suppose. All things considered...
What did the doc say?
Nothing useful. Unfortunately there's really no way of determining how long before she regains consciousness.
Assuming she ever does at all...
And the longer she's under, the greater the risk of her suffering permanent brain damage.
With that in mind, the rest of her injuries are minor in comparison. Hairline fractures on a couple of ribs, some cuts and abrasions...


...ARM'S BROKEN IN A BAD WAY-- BUT IT'LL HEAL IN TIME.
SHE MUST HAVE BENT IT BACK INTO PLACE HERSELF AFTER COMING TO FROM CREED'S INITIAL ATTACK.
AN INCREDIBLY PAINFUL ACT--WHICH, IF MY THEORY ABOUT OUR LINK IS CORRECT, CAUSED ME TO HAVE ONE OF MY SEIZURES.
AT LEAST THERE'S NO PHYSICAL HEAD TRAUMA--
--WHICH MEANS THAT WHATEVER FORCED HER MIND TO SHUT DOWN AND RETREAT INTO HER SUBCONSCIOUS IS MORE PSYCHOSOMATIC THAN ANYTHING ELSE.
FOR ALL WE KNOW, SHE COULD COME OUT OF IT ANY SECOND NOW...
THEN AGAIN IT COULD BE WEEKS, OR MONTHS. ALL WE CAN DO IS WAIT... TEND TO HER NEEDS, AND--
AND WHAT? JUST HOPE FOR THE BEST? FOR HOW LONG?
AS LONG AS IT TAKES.
WHAT IF SHE NEVER COMES OUT OF IT?
I... I DON'T KNOW, KID.
I CAN'T ANSWER THAT.


LATER...
I APPRECIATE YOUR LETTING ELENA STAY HERE UNTIL SHE RECOVERS FROM HER INJURIES.
IF IT'S TOO MUCH OF AN IMPOSITION, I CAN ALWAYS ASK DOC KELLER IF HE COULD--
NONSENSE, DEAR. DON'T GIVE IT A SECOND THOUGHT.
THAT'S RIGHT. WE WOULDN'T HEAR OF YOU TAKING HER ELSEWHERE. AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE FOR US--FOR OUR SON--WE COULDN'T POSSIBLY TURN YOU AWAY.

BESIDES, I'M A LICENSED PHYSICAL THERAPIST--OR AT LEAST I WAS UNTIL OUR CHANGE OF IDENTITIES FORCED ME TO GIVE UP MY PRACTICE.
I'M MORE THAN QUALIFIED TO HELP YOUR FRIEND RECUPERATE ONCE SHE'S UP AND ABOUT.
I HADN'T FORGOTTEN, MRS. JOHNSON.
IN FACT, I'VE BEEN MEANING TO GET YOU THE PROPER DOCUMENTS SO YOU COULD GET RE-CERTIFIED UNDER YOUR NEW NAME. I JUST HAVEN'T HAD THE TIME TO--
HEY. TAKE IT EASY--THAT WASN'T A COMPLAINT.
MY CAREER MAY BE IMPORTANT TO ME--BUT MY FAMILY IS MY NUMBER ONE PRIORITY. ALWAYS HAS BEEN. SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT OTHER STUFF FOR NOW.
AND PLEASE--IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE THE KIDS' UNCLE DAVID, WE INSIST YOU CALL US ROSE AND FRANK.

NOW, HERE--I PACKED SOME GRAPES AND ORANGES FOR YOU AND BRIAN FOR YOUR HIKE.
THERE'S ALSO SOME BROWNIES IN THERE--BUT BE SURE HE EATS THE FRUIT FIRST!
YES, MA'AM, I MEAN--ROSE.

SUPERPOWERS FOR SALE?!?

UCI

If You Love Comics Then The Next Five Minutes WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE!

***I'm** a UCI SuperCollector! Codename: Kraft.*

What I am about to reveal will change the way you look at comic book collecting forever. By the time you finish reading this you will know exactly what to do to go from a mere 98lb. weakling comic shop customer to a .....

UCI SUPER COLLECTOR!

Let's face it comic fan, it's become a scary world to collect comic books in.

Once confined to the shadows, the evil forces of comic book darkness now tread fearlessly in the daylight!

All around the signs of comic apocalypse are evident. Comic shops close. Cover prices rise. Publishers and long time favorite heroes disappear from store shelves.

You love comics but you're frustrated. No one will listen To you! No one Will hear your pleas For help!

You scream, "Bring Back the fun! Make Comic collecting EASY again! Make it affordable. Respect my Intelligence! HELP ME!"

CLUB PRES DENT
& PSYCH@PATHIC VIGILANTE
GARY S. KRAFT

Yes You try your best. You reserve your favorite comics in advance! You are the first to your comic shop on the day new comics are released. Yet you still miss issues. Issues you may never see again. Issues essential to your collection! The hobby that hooked you in your carefree youth is but a shadow of it's former self.

Yes, perhaps you have already cut back on your "must buy" list. Perhaps you have even considered finding a new hobby! Yes you are beaten and bruised and you can't, nay, you won't take it any more! You are fed up with being a pawn in the comic wars!

Yes, yes! Go to the window! Open it wide and shout at the top of your lungs, "I'm MAD as HELL and I'm NOT going to take it ANYMORE!!!!!!"

WHAT WENT WRONG?

Free enterprise, the phenomenon that made America the greatest country in the world was exchanged for communism, regulation and the fast buck.

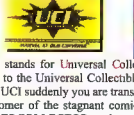
Comic shops once possessed the power to take their business elsewhere. But now only one distributor remains. Quite simply competition at the distributor level is dead. And when you remove competition you remove GROWTH! The rule of business and life is GROW OR DIE! Hence the depression that threatens the comic industry as a whole!.

WELCOME TO THE NEW WORLD ORDER: WHY I HELP YOU?

It's easy to complain But complaining in and of itself does little to remedy any crisis. What is required is SUPER POWERS! Yes, total control over one's destiny is the quickest route to happiness no matter what situation you find yourself in.

So as the comic world at large sinks deeper into the abyss, all across the globe concerned comic collectors are joining forces to combat the cloud of depression darkening our once happy and healthy hobby! But wait! Look up in the sky! It's a bird.. It's a plane! It's .. .. *THE UCI SUPERCOLLECTOR!*

ENTER UCI!



UCI stands for Universal Collectibles Inc. UCI is host to the Universal Collectibles Club. When you join UCI suddenly you are transformed from a mere customer of the stagnant comic shops into a UCI SUPERCOLLECTOR with powers far surpassing those of even your comic shop owner.

ASK YOURSELF THIS COMIC FAN

Which of the following SUPERPOWERS would you select if presented with the opportunity?

	YES	NO
SUPER SAVINGS	☐	☐
SUPER SELECTION	☐	☐
SUPER SERVICE	☐	☐
SUPER FAST DELIVERY	☐	☐
SUPER TIME TRAVEL	☐	☐
SUPER INTELLIGENCE	☐	☐

If you're like me one Super Power could never be enough! If you're like me you probably checked every box YES! Well then odds are you are a prime candidate for UCI SUPERPOWERS! Prepare yourself as the *COSMIC FORCE OF FREE ENTERPRISE TRANSFORMS YOU INTO A GOD!! YOU NOW WIELD THE POWER U-C-I !!!!*

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MANY MORE SERVICES INCLUDED BUT I'M RUNNING OUT OF ROOM COMIC FAN!

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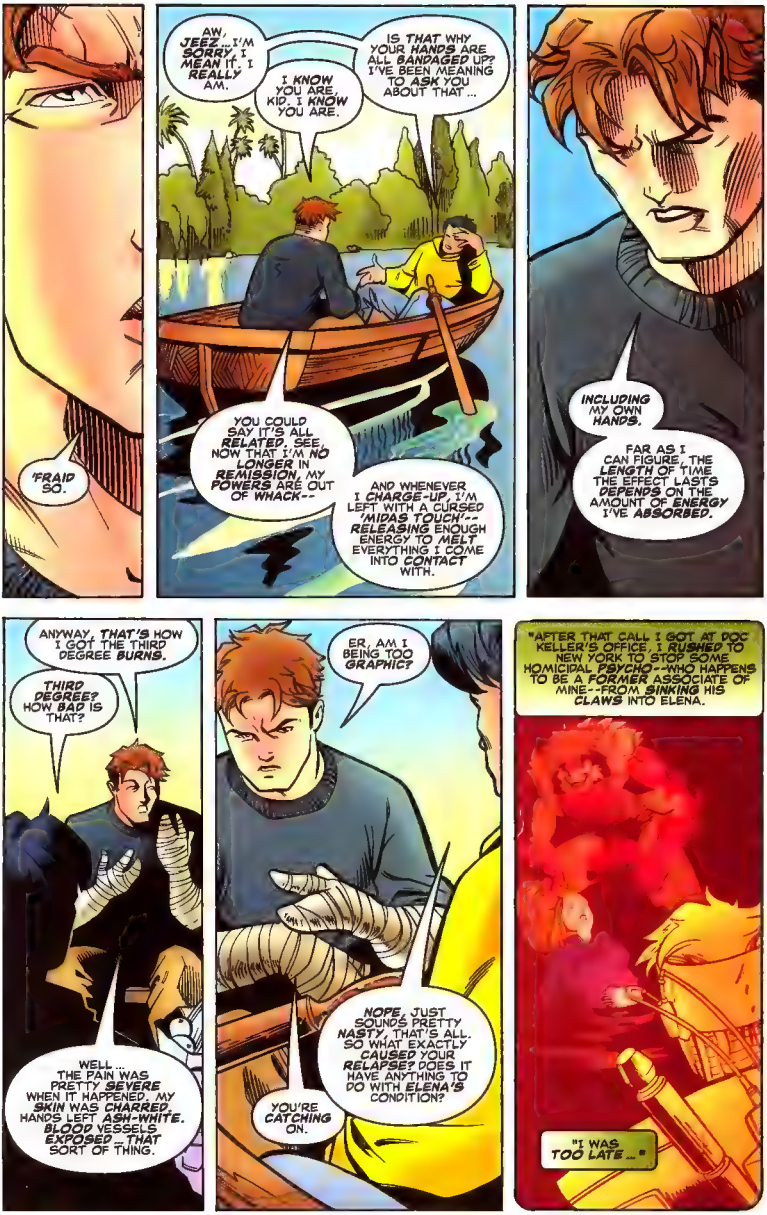
LAGUNA PARK--AN EXPANSIVE RECREATIONAL FACILITY JUST A SHORT WALKING DISTANCE AWAY FROM THE JOHNSON HOME.
UP FOR A BOAT RIDE?
SURE... BUT I WANNA DO THE ROWING.
ER, LISTEN, MAY--I WANNA CLEAR THE AIR BETWEEN US. I FEEL AWFUL ABOUT THE WAY I SHOT OFF MY MOUTH AT YOU LIKE THAT THE OTHER DAY.
I SHOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN SO UPSET ABOUT YOUR NOT TELLING ME ABOUT YOUR REMISSION.
BRIAN, DON'T--
PLEASE. LET ME FINISH. AT FIRST I WAS HURT YOU DIDN'T TRUST ME. SCARED THAT YOU WERE JUST HANGING AROUND HERE OUT OF PITY--
--CUZ YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE GUTS TO TELL A TERMINALLY ILL KID TO BUZZ OFF. BUT THEN I REALIZED I WAS BEING STUPID.
YOU WERE JUST TRYING TO PROTECT ME... THE SAME WAY I KEEP CERTAIN THINGS FROM MY FAMILY WHEN I DON'T WANT TO BURDEN THEM WITH MY PROBLEMS.
I MEAN, THEY'RE WORRIED ENOUGH ABOUT ME AS IT IS. SO MAYBE THAT WAS KIND'A HOW YOU FELT ABOUT ME--NOT TELLING ME THE TRUTH BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T WANT ME TO THINK THAT I HAD TO FACE THE VIRUS THING ALONE.
DOES THAT MAKE ANY SENSE? OR AM I JUST RAMBLING?
NO, KID--YOU HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD, AND YOU'RE BEING AWFULLY UNDERSTANDING.
STILL...BY ALL RIGHTS I SHOULD HAVE BEEN STRAIGHT WITH YOU FROM THE START. PROBABLY WOULD HAVE SPARED US BOTH A LOT OF GRIEF!
THE IRONY, OF COURSE... IS THAT THE POINT IS MOOT NOW.
I'M NOT FOLLOWING YOU. ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU'RE SICK AGAIN?


'FRAID SO.
AW, JEEZ... I'M SORRY. I MEAN IT. I REALLY AM.
I KNOW YOU ARE, KID. I KNOW YOU ARE.
IS THAT WHY YOUR HANDS ARE ALL BANDAGED UP? I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU ABOUT THAT...
YOU COULD SAY IT'S ALL RELATED. SEE, NOW THAT I'M NO LONGER IN REMISSION, MY POWERS ARE OUT OF WHACK--
AND WHENEVER I CHARGE-UP, I'M LEFT WITH A CURSED 'MIDAS TOUCH'--RELEASING ENOUGH ENERGY TO MELT EVERYTHING I COME INTO CONTACT WITH.
INCLUDING MY OWN HANDS.
FAR AS I CAN FIGURE, THE LENGTH OF TIME THE EFFECT LASTS DEPENDS ON THE AMOUNT OF ENERGY I'VE ABSORBED.
ANYWAY, THAT'S HOW I GOT THE THIRD DEGREE BURNS.
THIRD DEGREE? HOW BAD IS THAT?
WELL... THE PAIN WAS PRETTY SEVERE WHEN IT HAPPENED. MY SKIN WAS CHARRED, HANDS LEFT ASH-WHITE. BLOOD VESSELS EXPOSED--THAT SORT OF THING.
ER, AM I BEING TOO GRAPHIC?
NOPE. JUST SOUNDS PRETTY NASTY, THAT'S ALL. SO WHAT EXACTLY CAUSED YOUR RELAPSE? DOES IT HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH ELENA'S CONDITION?
YOU'RE CATCHING ON.
"AFTER THAT CALL I GOT AT DOC KELLER'S OFFICE, I RUSHED TO NEW YORK TO STOP SOME HOMICIDAL PSYCHO--WHO HAPPENS TO BE A FORMER ASSOCIATE OF MINE--FROM SINKING HIS CLAWS INTO ELENA.
"I WAS TOO LATE..."

"WE FOUGHT. BUT DURING THE BATTLE, I STARTED HAVING SEIZURES.
"TO MAKE A LONG STORY SHORT WHEN I NOTICED THAT MY SEIZURES COINCIDED WITH ELENA'S OWN DISTRESS...
"...I PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER AND REALIZED THAT MY SEEMING REMISSION WAS IN LARGE PART BEING MAINTAINED BY A RESIDUAL PSYCHIC LINK...
"...WHICH HAD BEEN SUBCONSCIOUSLY ESTABLISHED BETWEEN MYSELF AND ELENA WHILE WE WERE UP IN CANADA.
"THAT LINK WAS VIOLENTLY SEVERED WHEN THE PSIONIC BACKLASH FROM ELENA'S FORAY INTO THE CRAZED KILLER'S MIND PROVED TOO TRAUMATIC FOR HER PSYCHE..."
...CAUSING HER TO FALL INTO A COMA--AND ME ONCE AGAIN TO BE AT THE MERCY OF THE LEGACY VIRUS INFECTION.
OH MAN...THAT BITES.
TELL ME ABOUT IT.
SOOOOO--ENOUGH WITH THE HEAVY STUFF. HOW'S SCHOOL GOING...?

BULLPEN BULLETINS

ITEM! Get ready to hang ten, Marvelites! We've got a book coming your way that's gonna take you on a surfing safari to the farthest reaches of the galaxy and beyond! The book is called the ESSENTIAL SILVER SURFER, and it reprints those hard-to-find 17 issues of NORRIN RADD's totally rad comic from the swingin' sixties! This is the first time these classic stories have been reprinted in one volume! As for creators, how do these names grab you: STAN LEE, JOHN BUSCEMA, and JACK KIRBY! Thrill to the origin of the skyrider of the spaceways, and marvel at his encounters with such superstars as the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN and the MIGHTY THOR! Find out here why the SILVER SURFER truly is the most cosmic hero of them all! You'll have fun, fun, fun, 'til GALACTUS takes your surfboard away!

ITEM! You're reading these words in February, but thanks to the magic of lead time, we've just finished celebrating our 1997 holiday party! And what a party it was! Held at a fancy Manhattan ballroom called the Madison, the bash took up four fantastic floors, each offering its share of Yuletide fun! Many of Marvel's mightiest were there, including a couple of gents returning to the merry Marvel fold – CHRIS CLAREMONT, our Editorial Director and new FANTASTIC FOUR writer, and JOHN BYRNE, who's working on a top secret Spider-Man project that only those who have Internet access know about! Also in attendance: those fabulous KUBERT BROTHERS – ANDY and ADAM, of INCREDIBLE HULK and KA-ZAR fame; new X-MEN writer JOE KELLY; SEAN CHEN, who gives IRON MAN's armor that extra bit of polish; and RON GARNEY, who must be using his own musclebound figure as a model when he draws CAPTAIN AMERICA (which would explain why Ron was asked to check his shield at the door)!

ITEM! If you thought PETER PARKER has been through some rough times lately, you ain't seen nothin' yet! Take it from us, you just might want to pick up the Spidey books this month for the shocking prelude to the Spidey story of the year! Watch what happens when the wall-crawler is put in a position where he may have to stop being Spidey for good! You'll also meet PRODIGY, HORNET, RICOCHET, and OUSK – four new heroes who will have a lasting impact on the life of the webhead! Who are they? And what's their connection to everybody's favorite hard luck hero? The answers can be found in the stunning saga called "Identity Crisis" which runs through all of the Spidey titles in March and April! You won't believe your eyes when you witness the fateful decision that Peter Parker is forced to make!

AVAILABLE FEBRUARY 18

X-MEN: THE MANGA *3
As JUBILEE is held prisoner by government agent GYRICH the X-MEN are ambushed at the Mutant Control Center! By KOJI YASUE!

MAN-THING *5
MAN-THING gains a new ability – and no, it's not mud-wrestling! Plus the return of MAN-THING's old nemeses, THE CULT OF ENTROPY! By J.M. DeMATTEIS and LIAM SHARP!

STAR TREK: STARFLEET ACADEMY *17
Ever tried to remove a KATRA from a VULCAN? It's not easy – especially when the KATRA doesn't want to leave! By CHRIS COOPER and JOHN ROYLE!

CAPTAIN AMERICA *4
BATROC is back – just for kicks! Plus, SHARON CARTER, a disembodied RED SKULL, and the SUPREME HYDRA! HOO-HA! By MARK WAID and RON GARNEY!

THE ESSENTIAL SILVER SURFER TPB
This 528-page trade paperback contains the complete run of the Surfer's original series! Cosmic action as you like it! By STAN LEE, JOHN BUSCEMA and JACK KIRBY!

HEROES FOR HIRE *10
IRON FIST and CAGE have a crisis in SYMKARIA, homeland of SILVER SABLE! Who can they call? DEADPOOL! He's the temp from Hell! By JOHN OSTRANDER and PASCUAL FERRY!

INCREDIBLE HULK *463
BRUCE BANNER sneaks into the LEADER's lair to learn the secret of GENERAL ROSS's return! But only ARMAGEDDON and the TROYJANS know the truth! By PETER DAVID and ADAM KUBERT!

THUNDERBOLTS *13
The THUNDERBOLTS must stand trial for their crimes – and the sentence is death! How far will METEORITE go to insure her survival? By KURT BUSIEK and MARK BAGLEY!

WHAT IF?! *107
THOR finally marries the lady Sif- and settles down in ASGARD! What a lousy time for LOKI and MEPHISTO to attack Earth! By TOM DEFALCO and RON FRENZ!

PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN *90
Talk about having a bad day! SPIDEY is trapped in the NEGATIVE ZONE and bombarded by BLASTAAR THE LIVING BOMB BURST! By HOWARD MACKIE and JOHN ROMITA, JR.!

EXCALIBUR *119
KITTY, COLOSSUS, and NIGHTCRAWLER face their darkest fears, at the mercy of the dream demon called NIGHTMARE! By BEN RAAB and MELVIN RUBI!

X-MAN *37
As NATE is about to leave New York once and for all, he gets ambushed by three mysterious and very powerful beings! Guest-starring SPIDER-MAN! By TERRY KAVANAGH and CHRIS CROSS!

X-MEN *74
ARCHANGEL and MARROW are headed for trouble in the MORLOCK TUNNELS – and that's even before the ABOMINATION shows up! By JOE KELLY and CARLOS PACHECO!

Design by Richard Starkings and COMICRAFT

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes!

A sudden thought. Have you ever realized that the ol' Soapbox is more than the most popular column in all of contemporary literature? It's also an opportunity for you to relax and catch your breath while reading the most thrilling comics in the known galaxy! Think of it as a welcome oasis in a vast desert of awesome action and endless excitement! Best of all, you don't even pay extra for all this wonderment! No wonder Marvel is so beloved throughout the world! In fact I'm so carried away by the drama of it all that I hereby award a No-Prize to Marvel itself! Hey, it's my column, so why not? But enough of our brief flirtation with erudition – let's wend our way to the heavy stuff...

Let's start with Chanda D. Craft of Piedmont, SC, who wants to know:

"Was Professor X, Charles Xavier, named for the powerful yet controversial figures of the early 16th century – Charles V and Saint Francis Xavier?"

Hey, Chanda, no matter what any agents of DC may say, I'm not old enough to remember two guys from the 16th century! The 17th, maybe, but not the 16th! Actually, I picked the name Xavier simply to justify the title X-MEN – though I'm really flattered that you thought I might be hip to some 16th century celebs!

Wow, how did Brian Baxter Smith of Monroe, LA, dream up a question like this one:

"When the Marvel Bullpen was creating the world's greatest comics, did you ever dress up like a super-villain and terrorize them playfully?"

I'd love to say "yes," Brian, 'cause it would make me seem real colorful, but the fact is I look terrifying enough without resorting to a costume! Truthfully, since I was outnumbered by them, I was always more terrified of the Bullpen gang than they ever were of me!

Here's a real stumper from Bernard Patrick of Detroit, MI:

"Which creators do you think have done the most justice to your characters after you stopped writing them?"

Bernie, I've never considered the characters "mine." I'm just the guy who gave many of them their start. The minute new artists or writers take over a strip, it becomes theirs and they do the best they can *in their own style*, which is how it should be. I'd have a tough time picking any one over the others because, in my book, they're all the greatest!

Now that I've wiggled out of that one, let me close by saying that comic book writers, artists and editors are enormously talented people who, although working under the most gruelling deadlines imaginable, still manage to turn out spectacular strips that thrill and fascinate countless readers throughout the globe day after day after day – and that goes for our competitors' staffs as well. In fact, I'm so carried away by my own verbiage that I'll toss you a verse to close with: *"Comic books are done by pros // Doubt it and I'll punch your nose!"*

Excelsior!

Stan Lee

Think of the above as your main course. Now it's time for dessert, namely, our award-winning address. "Stan's Soapbox" c/o BULLPEN BULLETINS, Marvel Comics, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. It makes the heart beat faster, right?

THE ICE BOX.
0412 HOURS.
ARE THE VIDEO CAMERAS STILL OFF-LINE?
YES, SIR. THE STORM PROBABLY KNOCKED OUT OUR TRANSMISSION DISH AGAIN. UNLESS THE SIGNAL'S SOMEHOW BEING JAMMED...
SIR-- THERE'S BEEN AN ACCIDENT IN DOCKING BAY SEVEN!
WHAT?!
SOME SORT OF EXPLOSION... FIRES ARE SPREADING TO LEVELS TWO AND THREE...
...AND IT LOOKS LIKE SOME OF THE INMATES IN THE BASEMENT AREA MANAGED TO ESCAPE AFTER THEIR CELLS COLLAPSED FROM STRUCTURAL DAMAGE...
ALERT ALL AVAILABLE PERSONNEL.
WE'VE GOT TO TAKE SWIFT CONTROL OF THIS SITUATION AND SECURE THE PRISON BEFORE WE FIND OURSELVES WITH A FULL-SCALE RIOT ON OUR HANDS--!

NIKOLAI VRONSKY? I HAVE COME FOR YOU.
WHO THE--?!
FWA-
CHOOOM
YOU!
TELL ME SOMETHING, CONFESSOR. I'M WELL AWARE OF YOUR REPUTATION. ARE YOU HERE AS MY SAVIOR--OR EXECUTIONER?
YOUR MASTER FEELS YOU HAVE SUFFICIENTLY ATONED FOR YOUR PAST FAILINGS AND SHOULD BE RETURNED TO MOTHER RUSSIA. I'M HERE AT HIS REQUEST.
I SEE.
WELL, THEN--LEAD THE WAY, COMRADE. AND PLEASE--CALL ME SICKLE.

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS, FLORIDA.
HMM. RENTAL CAR PARKED IN THE JOHNSONS' DRIVEWAY. WONDER WHOSE IT IS?
WERE YOUR FOLKS EXPECTING ANY VISITORS?
NOT THAT I KNOW OF. THINK IT COULD BE TROUBLE?
NEVER HURTS TO BE CAUTIOUS. BUT NO SENSE GETTING EXCITED BEFORE WE HAVE REASON TO SUSPECT FOUL--
--PLAY.
ISABEL?
IS SOMETHING WRONG? MS. FERGUSON SAID SHE WAS A FRIEND OF YOURS.
SHE IS...
Gaaaah!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU TOO, DAVID.
I DIDN'T MEAN--I MEAN NOW DID--YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.
UH-HUH.

I'M SERIOUS. WHAT'S WITH THE SUDDEN ONE-EIGHTY? WHAT ABOUT YOUR PROMISE TO MICHEL TO NOT DO BUSINESS WITH ME ANYMORE?
LOOK AT ME, DAVID. THIS ISN'T BUSINESS. MADELINE AND I ARE HERE ON VACATION. DOING THE WHOLE AMUSEMENT PARK THING.
WE WERE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD... THOUGHT I'D SEE HOW IVANOVA WAS DOING.
ALSO WANTED TO CHECK OUT THAT MEDICAL EQUIPMENT I HELPED YOU SCORE. MAKE SURE LAB RAT GAVE YOU A GOOD DEAL.
YOUR BEING HERE IS JUST HAPPY COINCIDENCE. MY EX-HUBBY CAN'T FAULT ME FOR THAT.
RIIIGHT.
HI. YOU MUST BE BRIAN. I'M ISABEL FERGUSON. I DESIGNED YOUR CHATTERBOXES.
OH, COOL-- YOU'RE MAV'S "Q"! PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.
YOU DESIGN GADGETS, EH? DID I MENTION THAT I'M AN ENGINEER?
REALLY? WHERE DO YOU WORK?
MAVERICK RIGGED ME A JOB AT CYBER-TECH INDUSTRIES.
I'VE HEARD OF THEM. THEY DO A LOT OF CONTRACT WORK FOR N.A.S.A., DON'T THEY?
THAT'S RIGHT. I'M ACTUALLY PRETTY EXCITED ABOUT IT. SO'S MY DAUGHTER JENN. SHE SAYS SHE WANTS TO BE AN ASTRONAUT WHEN SHE GROWS UP.
BEEN PESTERING US TO TAKE HER TO CAPE CANAVERAL EVER SINCE WE MOVED HERE...
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME COFFEE?
NO THANKS. I'M NOT A BIG CAFFEINE FAN. MAKES ME JITTERY.

SUFFERIN' SUCCOTASH!

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Post

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KRAFT Kid's Brands

HEARTY DINNER LATER...
THERE YOU ARE. NOT BROODING, I HOPE.
NAW. JUST WALKING OFF THE MEAL. I'M STUFFED.
YOU AND MADDIE TAKING OFF?
IN A BIT. I WANT TO GIVE YOU SOMETHING FIRST.
OH? SOUNDS MYSTERIOUS.
MORE LIKE FOOLISHNESS ON MY PART. COME INSIDE...
WHAT ARE YOU--?
ZZRRP
VOILA!
VRRRRR
WELL, I'LL BE--!
AFTER YOU TOLD ME WHAT HAPPENED DURING YOUR JAUNT IN THE TUNNELS, I FIGURED YOU MIGHT BE NEEDING A REPLACEMENT SUIT.
SAME DESIGN AS THE OLD ONE--WITH A FEW MINOR MODIFICATIONS.
ALL MADE OUT OF THE LATEST KEVLAR AND LIGHTWEIGHT ARMOR PLATING.
CONSIDER IT A GIFT.
THANKS, LUV. YOU'RE THE BEST.

THE ICE BOX.
0436 HOURS.
UNN!
ARRKK--!
CHOOM
CHOOM
NOT MUCH IN THE SUBTLETY DEPARTMENT, ARE YOU?
JUST SHUT UP AND FOLLOW MY LEAD.
KLAK!
HANG ON!
SPROINNG

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- ☐ HFH Heroes For Hire
- ☐ JIM Journey Into Mystery
- ☐ SIL Silver Surfer
- ☐ INC The Incredible Hulk
- ☐ BLT Thunderbolts
- ☐ ZAR Ka-Zar
- ☐ WHI What If?

Spider-Man

- ☐ AMZ Amazing Spider-Man
- ☐ TUP Marvel Teamup
- ☐ SPI Spider-Man
- ☐ SSM Sensational Spider-Man
- ☐ PPK Spectacular Spider-Man

The X-Men

- ☐ CAB Cable
- ☐ DDP Deadpool
- ☐ EXC Excalibur
- ☐ GEN Generation X
- ☐ XME Uncanny X-Men
- ☐ WOL Wolverine
- ☐ FAC X-Factor
- ☐ XFO X-Force
- ☐ MAN X-Man
- ☐ MEN X-Men

Star Trek

- ☐ SFA Star Trek: Star Fleet Academy
- ☐ EVS Star Trek: Early Voyages

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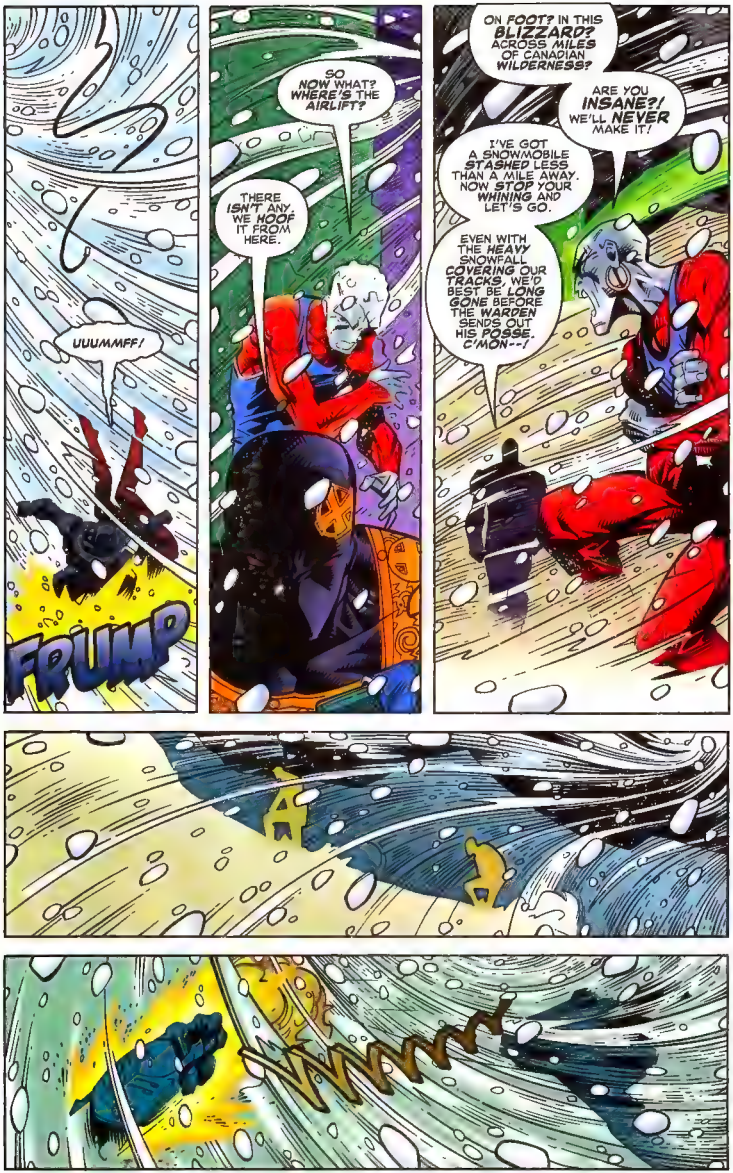
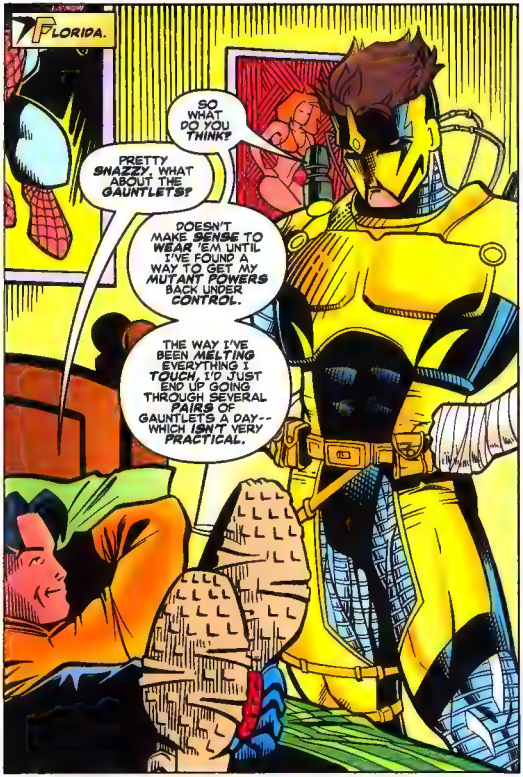
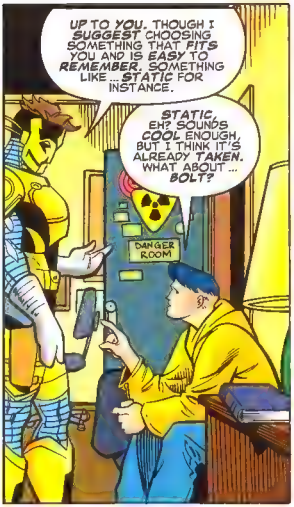

UUUMMFF!
FRUMP
SO NOW WHAT? WHERE'S THE AIRLIFT?
THERE ISN'T ANY. WE HOOF IT FROM HERE.
ON FOOT? IN THIS BLIZZARD? ACROSS MILES OF CANADIAN WILDERNESS?
ARE YOU INSANE?! WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT!
I'VE GOT A SNOWMOBILE STASHED LESS THAN A MILE AWAY. NOW STOP YOUR WHINING AND LET'S GO.
EVEN WITH THE HEAVY SNOWFALL COVERING OUR TRACKS, WE'D BEST BE LONG GONE BEFORE THE WARDEN SENDS OUT HIS POSSE. C'MON--!

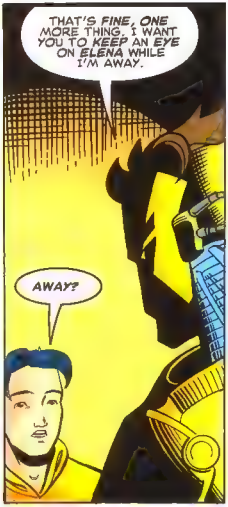

FLORIDA.
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?
PRETTY SNAZZY. WHAT ABOUT THE GAUNTLETS?
DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO WEAR 'EM UNTIL I'VE FOUND A WAY TO GET MY MUTANT POWERS BACK UNDER CONTROL.
THE WAY I'VE BEEN MELTING EVERYTHING I TOUCH, I'D JUST END UP GOING THROUGH SEVERAL PAIRS OF GAUNTLETS A DAY--WHICH ISN'T VERY PRACTICAL.

BY THE WAY, I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING.
EVEN THOUGH OUR CHATTERBOXES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE ON A SECURE LINE, I'D JUST AS SOON NOT TAKE ANY CHANCES WITH UNWELCOME EAVESDROPPERS.
AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE, I WANT YOU TO ADOPT A CODE NAME FOR WHENEVER WE USE THESE TO PROTECT YOUR NEW IDENTITY.

SAME GOES FOR WHEN WE'RE OUT IN THE FIELD TOGETHER. ANTI-MUTANT SENTIMENT BEING WHAT IT IS, ONE CAN NEVER BE TOO CAREFUL.
UNDERSTAND?

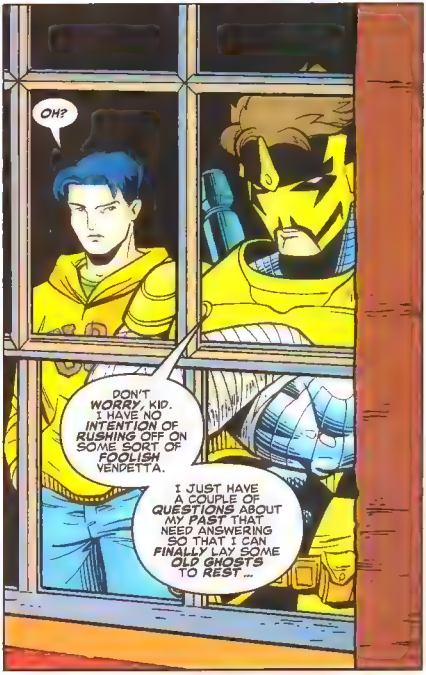
BELIEVE ME, AFTER MY LAST SCARE WITH THE FRIENDS OF HUMANITY--YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE!
WHAT KIND OF CODE NAME SHOULD I PICK?


UP TO YOU. THOUGH I SUGGEST CHOOSING SOMETHING THAT FITS YOU AND IS EASY TO REMEMBER. SOMETHING LIKE ... STATIC FOR INSTANCE.
STATIC. EH? SOUNDS COOL ENOUGH, BUT I THINK IT'S ALREADY TAKEN. WHAT ABOUT ... BOLT?
DANGER ROOM


THAT'S FINE, ONE MORE THING. I WANT YOU TO KEEP AN EYE ON ELENA WHILE I'M AWAY.
AWAY?

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
OVERSEAS.
OVERSEAS?! WHAT FOR?

RELAX. IT'S JUST FOR A FEW DAYS.
NOW THAT ... NOW THAT I'M ON BORROWED TIME AGAIN, THERE'S SOME PERSONAL MATTERS I NEED TO TAKE CARE OF WHILE I'VE STILL GOT THE CHANCE.


OH?
DON'T WORRY, KID. I HAVE NO INTENTION OF RUSHING OFF ON SOME SORT OF FOOLISH VENDETTA.
I JUST HAVE A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS ABOUT MY PAST THAT NEED ANSWERING SO THAT I CAN FINALLY LAY SOME OLD GHOSTS TO REST ...

How to start the mother of all wars

{or why deception, cruelty and betrayal are your friends}

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{or how to ensure the biggest, baddest, meanest SOBs are on your side}

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Effective battle strategies

{or further discussions from the annals of shoot first, ask questions later}

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PlayStation

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THE HEART OF THE KREMLIN. INSIDE AN OBSCENELY DECADENT 19TH CENTURY PENTHOUSE APARTMENT OVERLOOKING RED SQUARE--
--RUSSIAN GANGSTER IVAN THE TERRIBLE GREETS THE CONFESSOR WITH THE PROVERBIAL OPEN ARMS.
WELCOME TO NEWLY CAPITALIST MOSCOW. A CITY RIPE WITH EXCITING POSSIBILITIES-- WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?
YES. A VERITABLE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY...
THOUGH ONLY FOR THOSE WITH ENOUGH WEALTH TO CIRCUMVENT THE PITFALLS OF SO-CALLED FREEDOM.
WELL. NATURALLY. THAT WAS IMPLIED. PLEASE--HELP YOURSELF. EVERYTHING IS IMPORTED.
THE LOBSTERS WERE FLOWN IN FROM MAINE. THE LAMB FROM AUCKLAND. SCOTTISH SALMON. CAVIAR FROM AZERBAIJAN...
I CAN ASSURE YOU--IT IS ALL EXQUISITE!
NO, THANK YOU, PUSHKIN. I'M HERE STRICTLY ON BUSINESS.
I DON'T MEAN TO BE RUDE, BUT I'D JUST AS SOON COMPLETE OUR TRANSACTION AND BE ON MY WAY.
AH, YES, OF COURSE. EVER THE PROFESSIONAL, EH? WELL YOU NEEDN'T WORRY.
THE AMOUNT WE DISCUSSED--PLUS A BONUS--WAS TRANSFERRED TO YOUR SWISS ACCOUNT THE MOMENT I CONFIRMED YOU'D DELIVERED SICKLE SAFELY TO MY FARMHOUSE IN BOROVICHI.
A BONUS? I TAKE IT THEN THAT YOU WERE FULLY SATISFIED WITH MY SERVICES.
OR IS IT YOUR WAY OF COMPENSATING ME FOR HAVING TO PUT UP WITH THAT GYPSY'S FOUL-MOUTHED DISPOSITION?

CAREFUL YOU DO NOT OVERSTEP YOUR BOUNDS, CONFESSOR.
SICKLE HAS BEEN IN MY EMPLOY FOR MANY YEARS, AND HIS LOYALTY TO ME IS WITHOUT QUESTION. YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND...
YOU INTRIGUE ME. I MUST CONFESS I HAVEN'T QUITE YET FIGURED OUT WHAT MOTIVATES YOU NOW THAT THE SOVIET REGIME IS A THING OF THE PAST.
WHAT CAN I SAY? EVERYONE WANTS A TASTE OF THE SWEET LIFE. I'M NO EXCEPTION. MONEY TALKS. IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT.
ALL TOO TRUE. WHICH IS PRECISELY WHY I WISH TO OFFER YOU ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT.
SOMETHING OF A MORE... DELICATE NATURE.
OH? WHO'S THE LUCKY STIFF?

I BELIEVE YOU ARE ALREADY FAMILIAR WITH THE TARGET.
HIS NAME IS MAVERICK...

NEXT ISSUE
MAVERICK
VS.
THE CONFESSOR
'NUFF SAID!

NORTH DECODED

Dear *NORTH DECODED*,

From the first time Maverick appeared I knew he was a character who could handle his own book. I was not disappointed.

David is a man with a past that haunts him and a future that could destroy him. He's great and getting better each issue. Will more from his past come back like enemies and such? He's such a good character and deserves as much exploration as the other heroes.

Now Elena is a great addition and I hope she stays around for a while. I think she's good for David and he needs to remember how to feel love. Keep up the good work. I wish you a long and successful run on MAVERICK.

Tammy J. Suto
54 Shear St.
Rayland, OH 43943

Thanks, Tammy. Explore Maverick we will. The Confessor has a job to do next issue and it won't be pretty! As you know, thanks to the tender care of Doctor Creed, Elena is taking a very long nap in coma-land and Maverick is about to get ugly, literally! Man, he just can't catch a break these days. But we sure do love to kick him when he's down!

Dear *NORTH DECODED*,

I have come to you with a request, a Weapon X crossover or something like that! Maverick, Wolverine and Kane team-up to stop Sabretooth while Deadpool cases after them for some reason. There may be more Weapon X people, but you can fit them in somewhere. I think it's a good idea.

Also I like this book. The artwork is great and the story so far is very interesting. I'm glad it doesn't have much reference to Maverick and Wolverine's relationship; it is its own story. I do have one complaint: Maverick doesn't seem so cold anymore. He is more like a real person instead of a cold, hardened soldier like in his previous appearances. That's all for now, so keep up the good work!

Daniel Orr
9721 51 Place
College Park, MD 20740

Well, Daniel, Maverick is growing like all people do. After all he's got a "wife" and "kid" to think of now. So while he's off maiming some poor shlep, he's planning to bring home a loaf of bread and some milk! Is that so bad? That Weapon X idea sounds real good; we'll have to cane Bob Harras, the Editor in Chief, until he agrees to let us do it! It shouldn't take too long; we hear Bob has a low pain tolerance. We want people to see Maverick as separate from the X-Universe, so we bring in characters like Hammer and Sickle, Ivan Pushkin and the Confessor. We're real glad that you think of Maverick as Maverick and not "that X-guy."

Dear *NORTH DECODED*,

I've been a comic fan for the better part of three years and I must say I picked up MAVERICK #1 and was amazed at the quality of the book. I think the whole team has the right to be congratulated on an excellent job. I've just finished reading MAVERICK #4 and I'm still impressed by the art and writing. I have a few questions, though. What are those things on Maverick's back? What is Sabretooth's significance and will we see more of Pushkin in the near future? Until next month!

Nathan Pullen
3 Westlands Court
Munding Burra Townsville
Australia 4812

If it's more Pushkin you want, Nathan, it's more Pushkin you'll get. He has some plans for our hero. It would seem Maverick didn't do what he was brainwashed to do back in issue #3, so Pushkin wants him back for some retooling. The things on Maverick's back are batteries of sorts, so that the flashlight on his headgear will light up. Otherwise last issue would have been a bunch of black pages.

Dear *NORTH DECODED*,

WOW, beautiful work! The characters are starting to have some real depth and dimension to them. The MAVERICK book is coming along beautifully. Oh, by the way it's about time Maverick got his own book! Thanks!

Gizalla M. Hurtado
4046 Ezie St.
San Jose, CA 95111

You're right, Gizalla, it is about time Maverick got his own book. We're all glad that MAVERICK seems to be a cult hit. If it weren't for you guys out there we would be publishing BEET-MAN THE AVENGING VEGETABLE! Not too interesting but very healthy!

Dear Jorge and Jim,

I just finished issue #6 of MAVERICK and all I can say is WOW! And a big THANK YOU for another exciting chapter in the life of Marvel's coolest hero! The creative talent on this book is top notch, especially due to Jorge Gonzalez's solid storytelling and flawless characterization and Jim Cheung's pencils! This book looks GOOD!

Having said that, I have to confess that I was never a big fan of Maverick before his series. He always seemed like a tamer version of Wolverine, lacking any clear motivation and emotional layering that Jorge has given him, finally! Also worth noting is his relationship with Chris Bradley, a great tragic young hero in his own right, which gives the book a "heart" that so many others lack. Kudos to the kickin' trio of original villains:Sickle, Hammer and the Confessor.

Speaking of great characters that Jorge has created, what about a guest appearance by Booster and Tether from the UNCANNY X-MEN ANNUAL '97? These two are the most original, exciting and fascinating mutant characters I've seen in a long time. The power boosting talents of the albino body jumper Booster are full of potential and a riot too. Just imagine what would happen if he boosted Maverick's erratic powers, or the Blob's gravity-defying body, or Rogue's identity-absorbing touch. Don't even get me started on Tether's reptilian looks, deadly limbs, and take-no-prisoners attitude! Give these two a series please!

Thanks again everyone for a job well done! Congratulations! I'm really looking forward to enjoying many more adventures of MAVERICK!

Carlos A. Garza
1043 Dolores St.
San Francisco, CA 94110

Keep up with the compliments, Carlos and Jorge and Jim might not be able to leave their houses. Not that that would be. We keep trying to trap, um, keep them at home anyway. Jorge and Jim are definitely out there when it comes to wild characters! That Sickle guy still gives us the creeps. Giving Boost and Tether their own series, may be a bit much but a cameo would be cool. What do you guys think? Have the masses spoken? So it was written, should it be done?

Dear *NORTH DECODED*,

I recently picked up issue # 1-4 of MAVERICK, and I am happy to say that you have a bonafide fan! MAVERICK is dark, intense and exciting. This guy's past is almost as confusing and jumbled as Wolverine's and just as mysterious. Don't tell the guys over at DEADPOOL, but I'd like to nominate MAVERICK as the best new comic of the year! I collected almost all of the X-Books with the exception of two, and MAVERICK is definitely a welcome addition!

Can Maverick absorb kinetic energy as well as impact or is he limited to impact alone? Since Maverick rechannels energy he absorbed through his hands can he channel it through his feet? Is Elena a mutant? And lastly, is Maverick going to run into Sabretooth? Please keep up the good work!

Kevin S. Nelsa
2010 Bruckner BLVD. 2F
Bronx, NY 10473

Well, Kevin, it's about time you came aboard! Haven't you read the other letters? We rock! Don't worry, though, we won't say anything to the DEADPOOL guys; we'll just rent a blimp and park it next to their window. Maverick is able to absorb kinetic energy as well as energy from impacts. Through his feet? We suppose so, but would you really want to see that? GROSS! Elena is indeed a mutant, and Maverick has already gone a few rounds with Sabretooth. But it's not over yet. Mr. Creed doesn't take kindly to baths!

NORTH DECODED c/o MARVEL COMICS
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NEXT ISSUE:

A CONFRONTATION WITH THE CONFESSOR REVEALS A SHOCKING SECRET ABOUT MAVERICK'S PAST. PLUS, CHRIS MAY BE FORCED INTO ACTION SOONER THAN HE EXPECTED!

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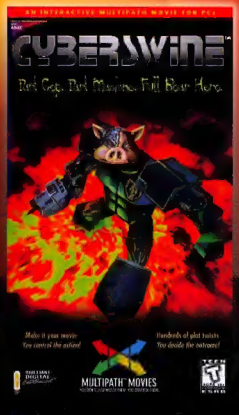
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